

**APPENDIX 1: TOWN OF MILTON DOWNTOWN STUDY INTERIM
REPORT**

DOWNTOWN STUDY INTERIM REPORT

PREPARED BY

THE TOWN OF MILTON PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT
DEPARTMENT

JANUARY 2016

Downtown Study Interim Report

1.0 What is the Downtown Study?

The purpose of the Downtown Study is to examine in-depth the current state of Downtown Milton to optimize opportunity for redevelopment and revitalization and to provide a unified strategy and implementation framework to shape the future of the Downtown. This will allow the area to evolve cohesively as Milton grows. The study is built on a combination of planning analysis and public engagement. The study area has been divided into two areas the “Primary Area” and the “Secondary Area” as shown in Appendix 1 Figure 1. The Primary Area which is comprised of a significant portion of Town owned lands, also known as the Civic Precinct is the first area to be examined. This primary area is prioritized in order to provide a strong civic base for Downtown revitalization to move forward.

Milton has experienced significant growth pressures as a result of provincial planning policy directions, such as the “Places to Grow” and the Provincial Policy Statement, which require intensification. An objective of this study is to identify how much of that intensification can be feasibly accommodated within the Downtown. In addition, the study will address compatibility of any intensification with the elements of the Downtown which are historically important and valued by the community including specific landmark and heritage buildings, the overall historic character and views to the Niagara Escarpment.

In 2013 the Town Released a Request for Proposal for a Civic Precinct Study, which was intended to review the development potential of these Town owned properties. The Study did not proceed at that time and is now being completed as the first phase of the Downtown Study. The Downtown Study will consider the possibilities for the civic precinct lands within the greater context of downtown Milton, including consideration of the historical value, the character of the area and the evolving role of the downtown. There are a variety of opinions over the role of the Downtown Historic Core in the community, yet there has been a clear consensus, or theme based on the work undertaken to date, that the Downtown serves as the physical and symbolic heart of the community. In keeping with this theme, it is important to maintain and enhance the Downtown as an asset for the entire community of Milton, not just for the immediate surrounding area. Protecting and enhancing the Downtown is essential in protecting the identity of Milton as the community continues to grow.

The Town needs to take a leadership role in moving the Downtown forward in both setting up a policy framework and guidelines to direct Downtown redevelopment and

utilizing key civic lands to stimulate private investment. This approach is consistent with the actions identified in Destiny Milton 3, specifically to develop a comprehensive policy and operational framework to support the revitalization and sustainability of the Downtown as a focal point for the community.

To date staff has conducted an initial public engagement session to gather input and opinion about the Downtown including what its current role is, where there are perceived opportunities for enrichment and what is currently missing from the Downtown. There has also been analysis done to identify the high opportunity locations. Using the knowledge gathered from both of these processes staff has produced concepts for some of the Town owned lands to identify the capacity for new contextually appropriate built form which can now serve as a basis for market analysis and a future business model to create a better understanding of market potential and provide a realistic idea of what can be accommodated. This can also guide future policy changes that will be brought forward as a future action item.

2.0 Public Engagement Summary

An initial Downtown Study public engagement session was held on June 29th, 2015, which 37 members of the public attended. The meeting began with a presentation outlining the purpose of the Downtown Study followed by a workshop guided by questions where the community had the opportunity to provide comments on what they value about the Downtown and what they felt could improve the quality, use and character of Downtown Milton.

There were a wide variety of thoughts and opinions expressed, but several common themes that appeared throughout the results staff received. Some of the thoughts raised throughout the session include the following:

- The need to preserve the character and identity of Downtown Milton, the need to bring more people into the downtown (both living in the Downtown and visiting the Downtown)
- The need for a civic square, and space to be able to accommodate and attract people into the downtown with year round events
- The need for Main Street to be more pedestrian friendly and provide inviting public space
- The need for a diverse range of uses that compliment the Historic Downtown but also keep people engaged in the downtown at all times of day and evening.

●Parking concerns were also frequently discussed throughout the evening although the comments were quite diverse; the general consensus was that parking needs should be carefully examined as the Downtown evolves.

3.0 Vision for the Downtown

Use a strong Civic presence as an anchor to build on while amplifying Downtown Milton's historic assets into a vibrant, pedestrian-oriented Downtown with a high quality public realm. Harmoniously preserve the beloved character of the Downtown while intensifying in ideal locations, creating a sense of Place for all of Milton with a space to be enjoyed by the entire community.

The Vision for the Downtown Study describes how the Town will guide the Downtown into transitioning from its current state to its desired evolution. When breaking down the above vision it is clear that there are five main objectives:

- 1. Civic Presence as an Anchor in the Downtown**
- 2. Build on the Existing Heritage**
- 3. Create a vibrant Public Realm – A destination for the entire community.**
- 4. Have a pedestrian friendly, interactive community**
- 5. Place making for the entire community.**

These five components have been derived from feedback collected through our initial public engagement session, ongoing Official Plan objectives to protect the Historical Downtown and staff consultation.

Civic Presence as an Anchor in the Downtown

Having Town Hall within the Downtown is a key asset that can be used as a building block when revitalizing Downtown. The potential redevelopment of the Civic Precinct lands will be a crucial step in moving the Downtown forward. It is important that the Town takes a leadership role in implementing a Vision for the Downtown, and incentivizing the appropriate form of development and investment in Downtown. The Town has the opportunity to expand the importance of a civic presence as an anchor within the Downtown beyond Town Hall by carefully considering redevelopment options within the Civic Precinct.

Building on the Existing Heritage

It is imperative that as the Town grows as a community the Downtown continues to evolve, and the Historic Downtown Core remains relevant in this context. The

Downtown needs to be a place where all residents have the opportunity to appreciate and feel connected to Milton's history.

Create a Vibrant Public Realm – A destination for the entire community

It is equally important to be able to obtain a diversity of uses. A diverse range of uses will contribute to a distinct sense of identity, vibrancy and economic viability. Achieving the proper uses in optimal locations will be a critical step as the Downtown evolves. It is important to note that commercial functions of a Downtown Core are distinctly different from master planned commercial nodes. Because of this, Downtown development cannot be treated with the same model. It is important to encourage economic development while mindfully preserving the identity of the Downtown Core. Such concepts are discussed in the Town's Official Plan through policies such as Section 2.4.3.6. c) "encourage residential and commercial intensification of Milton's downtown core that complements existing heritage and retail areas, while recognizing the flood susceptible areas;". This includes a high quality public realm and space within the Downtown Core that can be enjoyed by all. An engaging public realm has intangible benefits to the community since it creates an environment that invites people throughout all times of day.

Have a Pedestrian Friendly, Interactive Community

While having a vibrant downtown and distinct sense of identity created by the function and uses within a space are important, it needs to be supported by a pedestrian friendly streetscapes and human-scaled built form. The community using the Downtown needs to feel safe and engaged. Historically, downtowns have been developed to cater to pedestrians and that function needs to be encouraged allowing for an interactive community and ensuring that cars do not dictate how space within the Downtown is used.

Place making for the Entire Community

It was identified in the public engagement session that a key missing ingredient of the Downtown is a Civic gathering space. These types of spaces are found in many downtowns throughout growing municipalities and often serve as an anchor for a variety of year-round activities. This may be served through a public square that would anchor Downtown Milton as a year-round destination. A civic gathering space, such as a public square, would provide an opportunity to better connect the Downtown to the larger community.

Overall, it is important that throughout the study the Vision reflects the desires of the community and is a tool that should be used to assist in guiding decisions, goals and action items while moving forward with a Strategy for the Downtown.

Attached as Appendix 1 Figures 7 and 8, are maps illustrating the communities comments and suggestions from the June 2015 Public Engagement Session. These visuals express what we heard from the community, and give locational context to the comments.

4.0 Current Analysis – Opportunity Lands

As briefly discussed in this report already, Staff has conducted some planning analysis which has identified opportunity lands within the Town's Historic Downtown Core. These lands have been identified based on context, location and redevelopment constraints (i.e heritage significance and floodplain boundary). The Primary Study Area is consistent with the boundary of the Historic Downtown Core and contains the Town owned lands. The Secondary Area is the greater area surrounding the historic downtown core, also known as the Character Area. These study areas are illustrated in Appendix 1 Figure 1. The Study will ultimately address both Areas but the initial focus has thus far been on the primary area, in order to provide a stable block to build upon prior to moving outward to the balance of the character area. It is also significant to note that although the analysis has identified high opportunity areas within the historic downtown core, these are not the only opportunity areas which could potentially support redevelopment. Other properties may also have redevelopment potential depending on the outcome of additional heritage assessment.

The first step of the work program was to identify the properties having potential heritage interest, some of which contain designated heritage buildings. These properties are shown on Appendix 1 Figure 2. Due to their heritage attributes, these properties are valued and should be regarded as assets to be protected as the downtown evolves. As such, at least on a preliminary basis, these lands were not identified for redevelopment.

Once the buildings of heritage interest were identified, an assessment of the balance of the lands was completed to identify opportunity lands which are highlighted in Appendix 1 Figure 3. Out of the 4.2 Acres of Opportunity Lands, the Town owns 2.76 acres, or approximately 65% of the land base. Ownership provides the Town with the unique ability to take a leadership role in stimulating investment in the Downtown.

Subsequently, 3D modelling work was completed to illustrate different massing options and concepts of how the redevelopment of key Civic Opportunity Lands could be undertaken. These concepts have enabled staff to determine the capacity of built form that can potentially be accommodated on these Civic Opportunity Lands. The concepts have address compatibility considerations such as height, location and context. These concepts are outlined in Appendix 1 Figures 5 and 6. These concepts must now be tested in order to determine the appropriate range and mix of land uses within this built form to best maximize the potential of these key properties in current market conditions.

5.0 Next Steps

The next phase of the Downtown Study will be to identify immediate next steps or deliverables as well as long-term opportunities and directions, as detailed below.

5.1 Immediate Next Steps

The next immediate short term steps will include engaging consulting services to complete a market analysis. The purpose of the market analysis is largely to determine what growth can be accommodated in the Downtown from an economic perspective. This market analysis will create a profile to the types of supporting uses that should be considered to help strengthen the economic diversity including the range and quantum of uses that can be supported and accommodated within the Historic Downtown Core. This study will confirm optimal locations for the identified uses for the Downtown Core, and rationalize parking options and requirements for intended land uses. It will also aim to address the causes for the vacancies within the current Downtown context. It is anticipated that there will be a business plan developed from the Market Analysis that will look at the market potential, phasing and feasibility of the redevelopment concepts and options. Once completed, a Summary Report will be brought forward including a detailed policy analysis and recommendations.

There will also be a second public engagement session that will present the identified opportunities, summarize what was heard at the first public engagement session and provide the community the opportunity to comment on how these directions reflect their desired vision for the Downtown. The developed concepts will also be presented for comment, so the community can have input about what they do and do not like about particular concepts and whether their opinions have been accurately reflected in these designs.

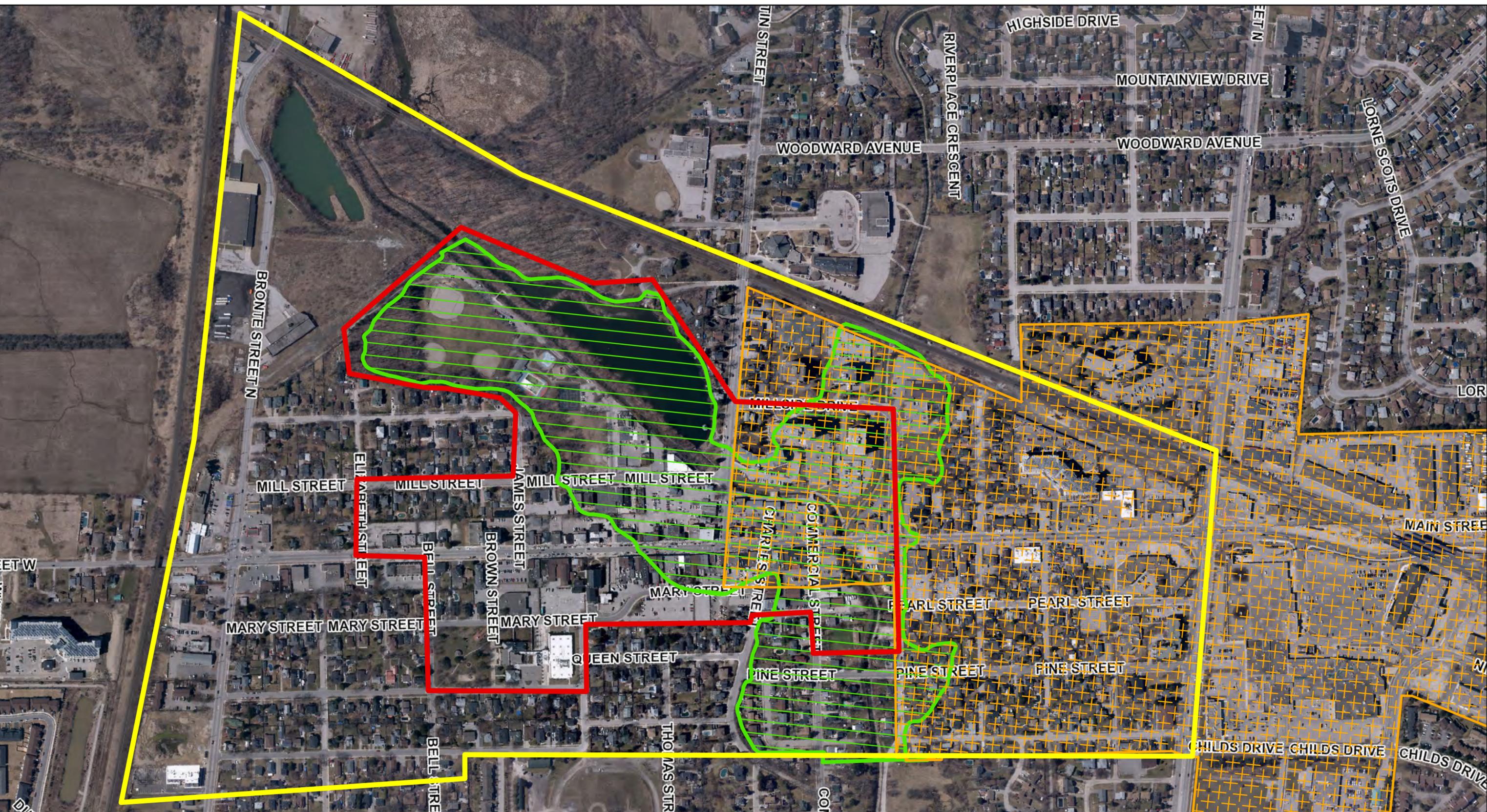
5.2 Long Term Next Steps

For the Downtown Study it is anticipated that there will be a series of action items that will be proposed to occur in phases over a period of time. One of the first deliverables will include Official Plan and Zoning By-law amendments introducing the changes required to support the types of redevelopment and enhancements that are identified through the study process.

The study will then be expanded to review the Primary Area and extend to the Secondary Area and address issues arising from growth pressures within the broader Character Area. These issues include confirmation of the boundaries of the character area, identification of the heritage assets and consideration of preservation methods to protect and enhance those assets as appropriate.

It is anticipated that Design Guidelines will be established that will help shape future development opportunities and examine potential improvements for the public realm.

In order to address parking concerns that have been expressed, parking issues, opportunities and options will be considered. As part of the review of the built form for the precinct area, opportunities for the future expansion of Town Hall will be considered. Communication and community engagement will continue to be important elements of the study.



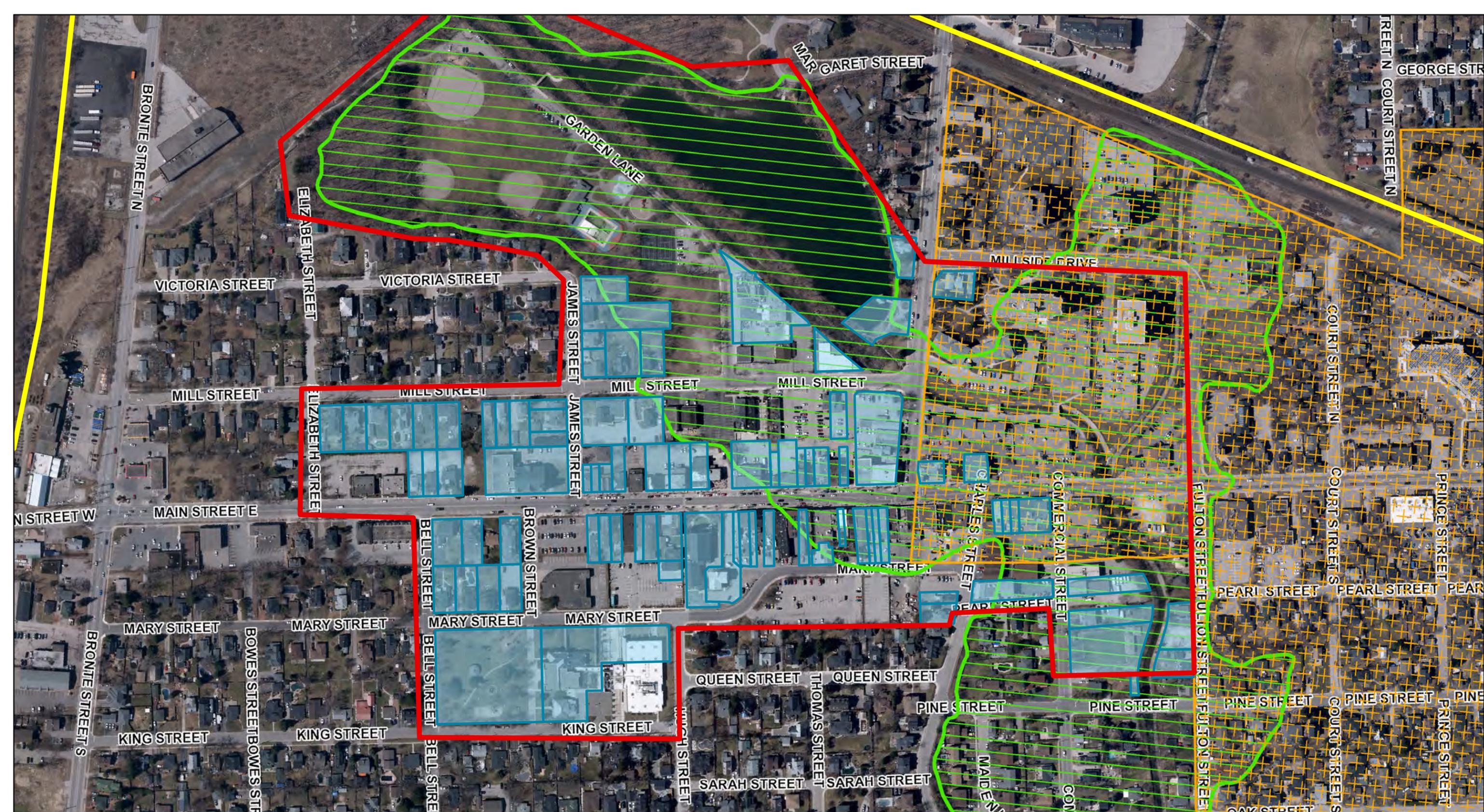
DOWNTOWN PRIMARY & SECONDARY AREAS

- Flood Plain
- Primary Study Area
- Urban Growth Centre
- Secondary Study Area

APPENDIX 1
FIGURE 1



Scale: 1 : 5,000



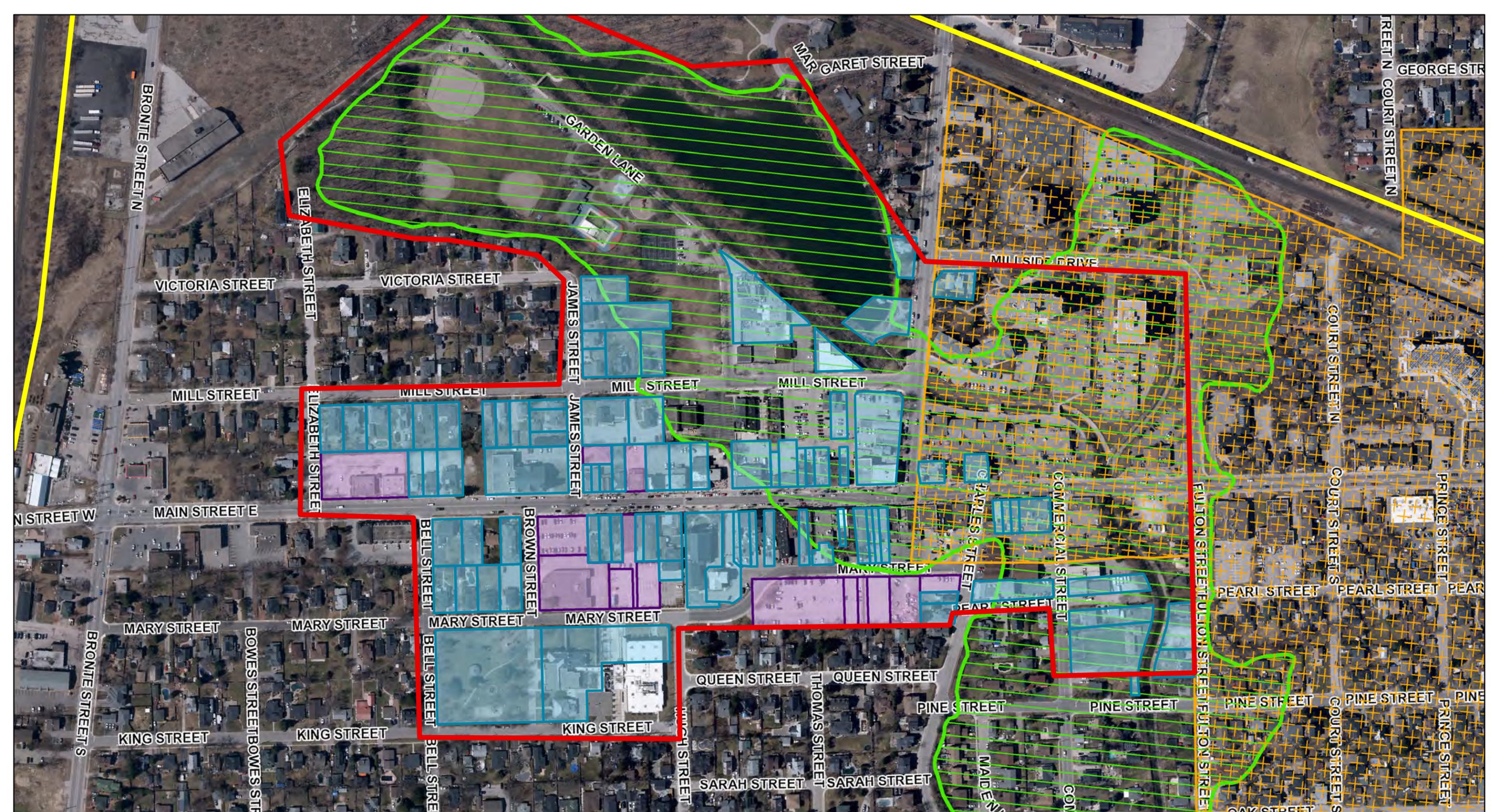
DOWNTOWN PRIMARY AREA HERITAGE PROPERTIES

APPENDIX 1
FIGURE 2

- Flood Plain
- Primary Study Area
- Secondary Study Area
- Properties of Heritage Interest
- Urban Growth Centre



Scale: 1 : 3,000



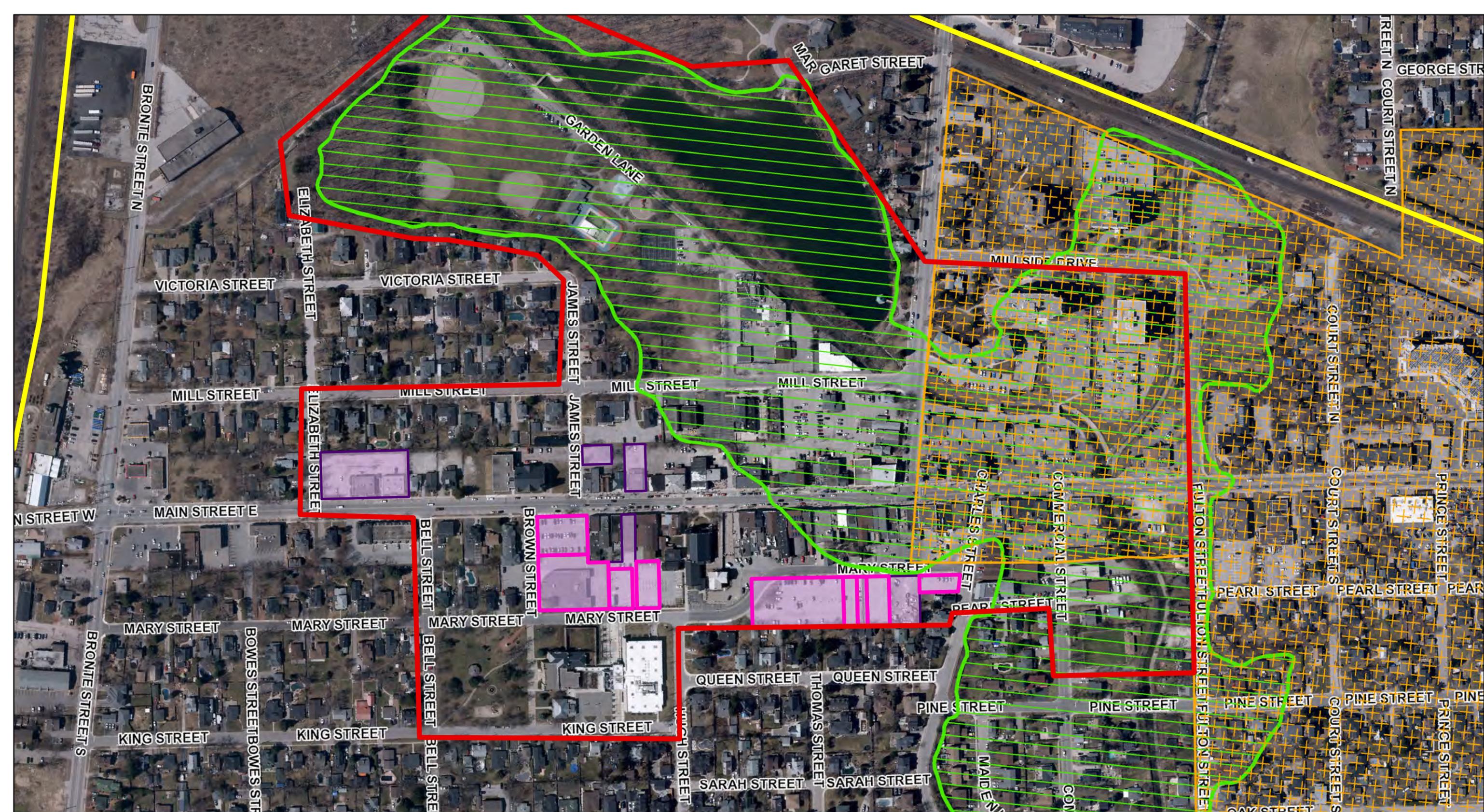
DOWNTOWN PRIMARY AREA OPPORTUNITIES

APPENDIX 1
FIGURE 3

-  Flood Plain
-  Urban Growth Centre
-  Primary Study Area
-  Secondary Study Area
-  Opportunity Areas
-  Properties of Heritage Interest



Scale: 1 : 3,000



DOWNTOWN TOWN OWNED OPPORTUNITY LANDS

APPENDIX 1
FIGURE 4

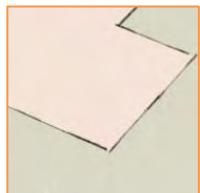
- Flood Plain
- Urban Growth Centre
- Primary Study Area
- Secondary Study Area
- Opportunity Areas
- Town Owned Lands



Scale: 1 : 3,000

CONCEPTS

Legend



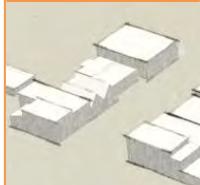
Public Realm Improvement Area



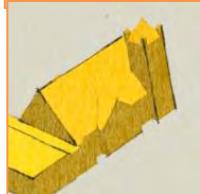
Underground Parking Garage



Concept Building

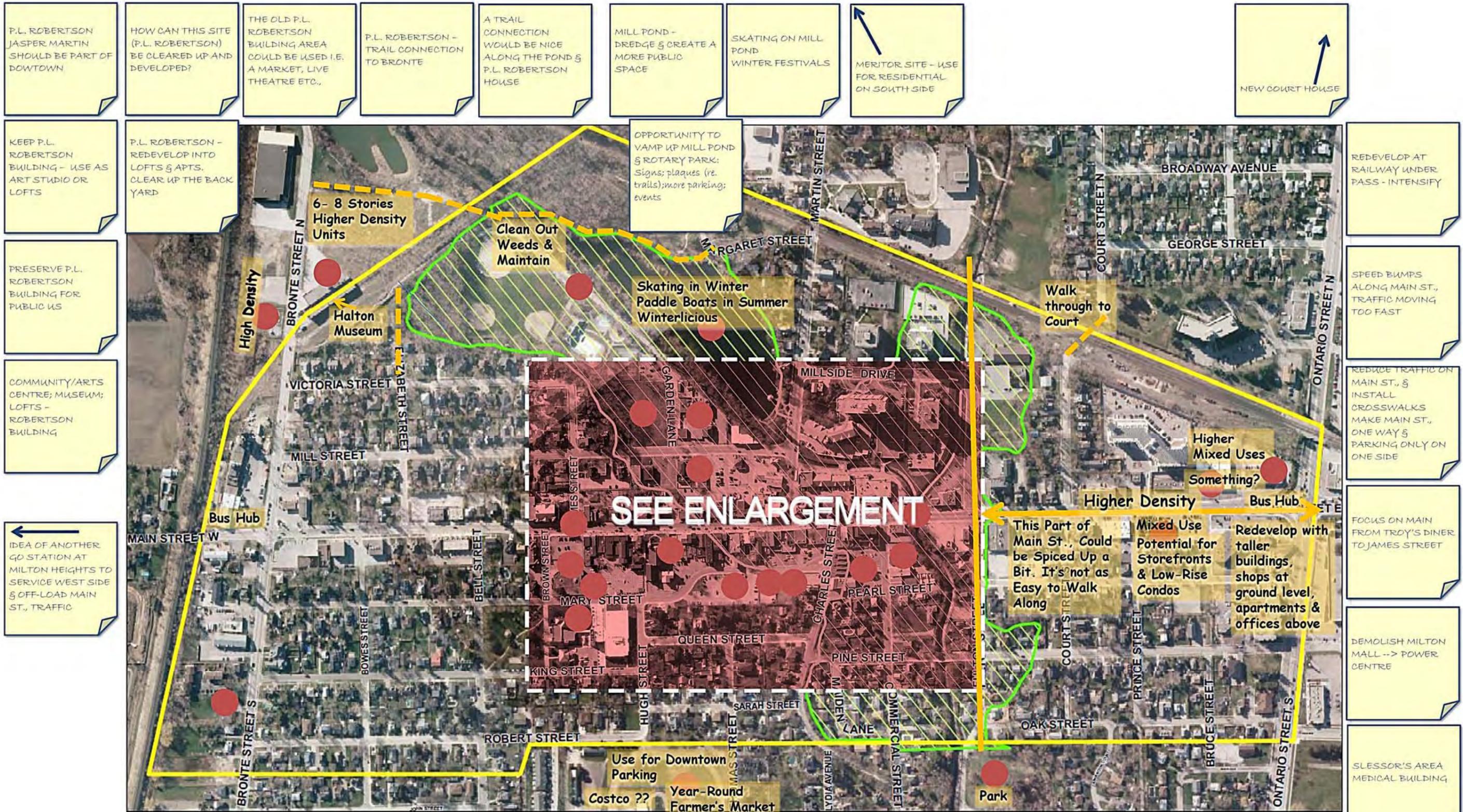


Existing Buildings



Landmarks





DOWNTOWN STUDY

- FLOOD PLAIN
- POTENTIAL STUDY BOUNDARY



Not to Scale

June 2015
 Planning & Development Department
 Copyright 2015: Town of Milton, Teranet Inc.

APPENDIX 1
 FIGURE 7

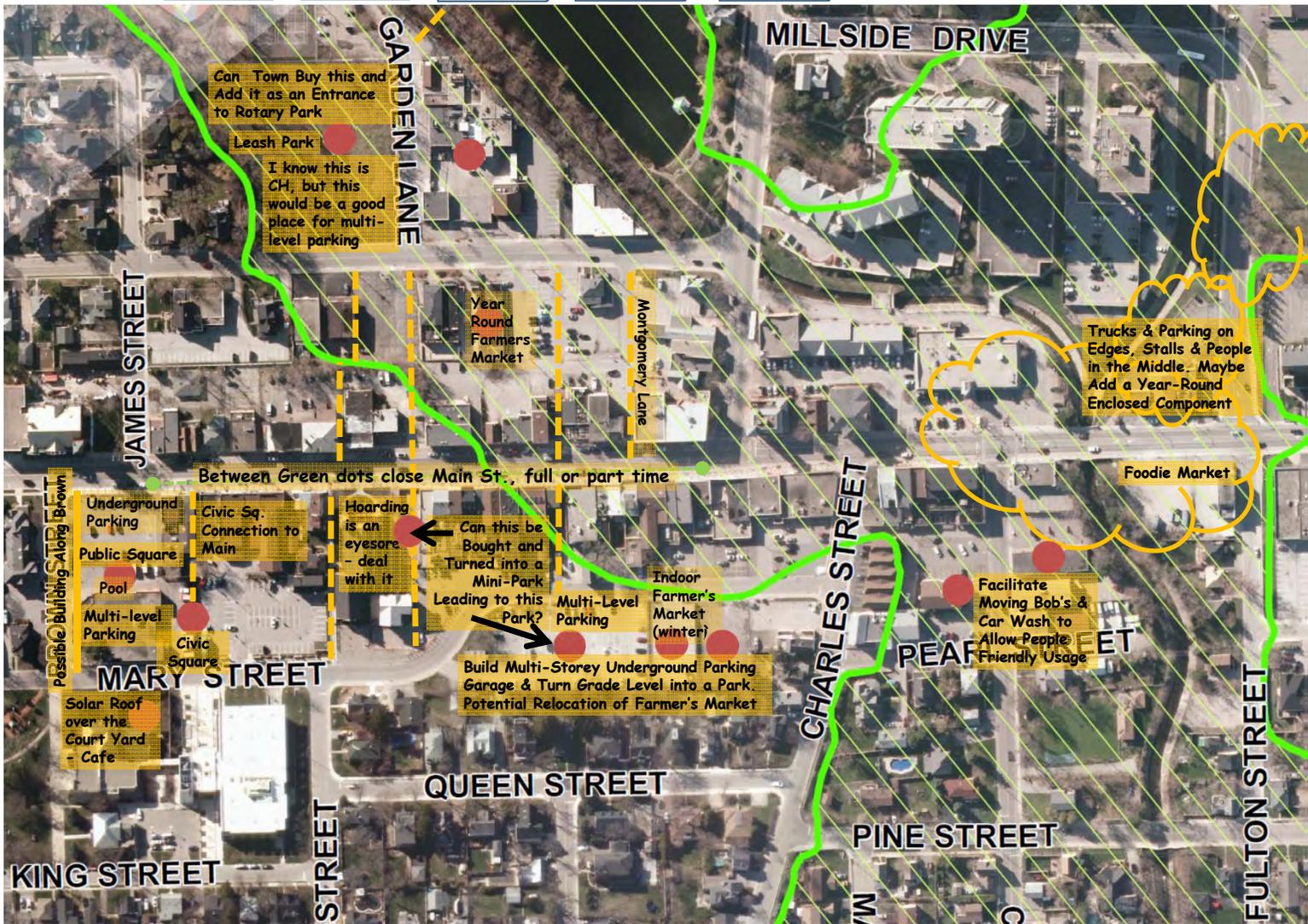
EXTEND HUGH LANE THROUGH

GARDEN LANE PARK BRIDGE OVER CREEK

GARDEN LANE COULD BE EXTENDED ACROSS MAIN - EAST OF CHURCH

IF CHICKEN PLANT WAS GONE - IDEAL PLACE FOR A TOWN SQUARE, OUTDOOR AMPITHEATRE "CELEBRATION SQ." MISSISSAUGA

MONTGOMERY LANE OPENED UP



NEED MORE BENCHES ON MAIN STREET TO SIT

MEETING AREA ON MAIN - TEAR DOWN FORMER POST OFFICE

BROWN ST., COULD BE A PUBLIC SQUARE

CIVIC PLAZA WITH PARKING UNDER AT BROWN & MAIN

TEAR DOWN POSTAL BUILDING REMOVE PARKING LOTS AT MAIN/BROWN & MARY & TURN INTO LARGE ENTRY SQUARE TO TOWN HALL

MAIN-BROWN-MARY ST., UNDERGROUND PARKING, MAIN FLOOR RETAIL, TOWN EXTENSION, UPPER PARKING, BUILDING TO LOOK HERITAGE

BROWN & MARY ST., SHOULD BE A 4 OR 5 STOREY PARKING WITH UNDERGROUND PARKING - RETAIL ON THE 1ST LEVEL & PARKING ABOVE. SHOULD LOOK LIKE A HERITAGE BUILDING

CLOSE OFF MARY ST. FROM BROWN TO HUGH

STRAIGHTEN MARY ST., PUT PARKING A LOT CLOSER TO STORES

HOW ABOUT RETAIL /SHOP SPACE ALONG MARY ST., WITH PARKING BEHIND. BECAUSE OF THE RESIDENTS THIS SHOULD NOT BE MULTI-LEVEL PARKING

BUILD PARKING GARAGE, ELIMINATE ON-STREET PARKING, SO THAT BUSINESSES, PARTICULARLY RESTAURANTS CAN EXPAND THROUGHOUT THE SEASON NOT JUST FESTIVALS

PARKING GARAGE - MARY ST. - AND FREE-UP SHOPPERS PARKING

Trucks & Parking on Edges, Stalls & People in the Middle. Maybe Add a Year-Round Enclosed Component

NO PARKING ON MAIN ST., WIDER SIDEALKS, SPEED BUMPS, CROSSWALKS, SIGNS FOR PARKING IN BACK

APPENDIX 1
FIGURE 8